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21 January 1961

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



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State Dept. review completed

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25X1

21 January 1961

CONTENTS

THE COMMUNIST BLOC

25X1



2. USSR central committee plenum on agriculture.
(Backup, Page 5)

ASIA-AFRICA

25X1



5. Current elections in Iran. (No Backup)

25X6



THE WEST

7. Dominican Republic - Venezuela:
New Trujillo plot against Betancourt. (No Backup)

25X1



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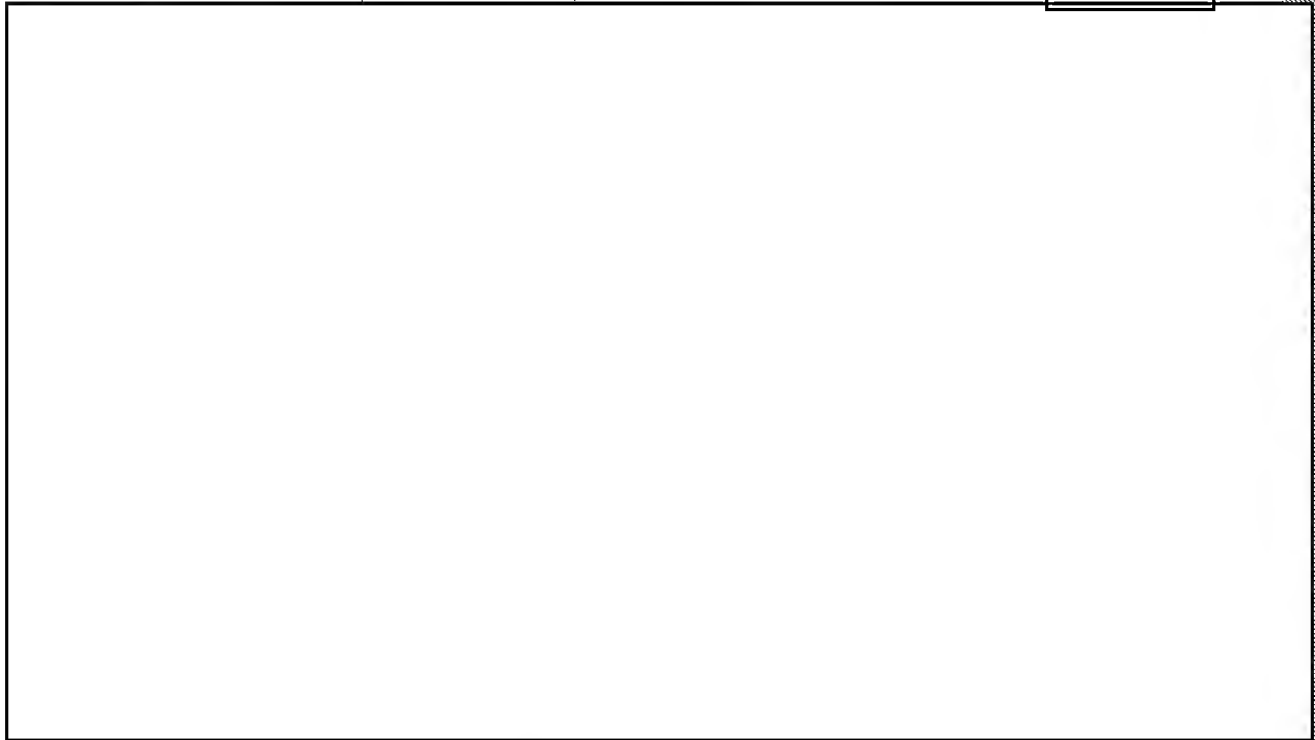
21 January 1961

DAILY BRIEF

25X1

THE COMMUNIST BLOC

25X1

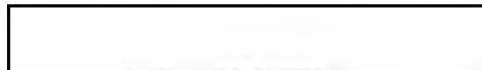


OK *Soviet Agriculture: The proceedings of the 10-18 January meeting of the hierarchy of the Soviet party in Moscow, including a lengthy and sometimes vitriolic speech by Khrushchev, confirm that Soviet agriculture has made but little progress in the last two years and outline in detail Khrushchev's program for a major effort to solve the USSR's chronic agricultural problems. The proceedings imply an expansion in the resources devoted to the improvement of agricultural prospects but not in such quantity as to modify the basic orientation of the economy toward the expansion of heavy industry. Portions of policies earlier imposed by Khrushchev on Soviet

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agriculture, notably those concerning the "new lands," the corn-for-fodder program, and the substitution of incentives in place of coercion and Communist enthusiasm as motivation for the Soviet farmer, have been very forcibly restated.

25X1

25X1

ASIA-AFRICA

21 Jan 61

DAILY BRIEF

ii

25X1

25X1

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***Iran:** The Shah, faced by chronic financial difficulties and persistent nationalist opposition, is trying to strengthen his position with a new round of rigged parliamentary elections, now about 20 percent completed. The elections started in rural areas about a week ago and are scheduled for Tehran about the first of February. The Shah apparently has hoped that the elections, besides fulfilling constitutional requirements, would produce a favorable impression on the United States, on which he continues to rely for financial help. Although the Shah will obtain a reasonably docile parliament, the electoral methods and the disorders which may still result from them, particularly in Tehran, will maintain the breach between the Shah and the people, and the possibility of a coup against him continues. 0 /<

In an effort to moderate Soviet propaganda the Shah plans to send a "good-will" mission to Moscow in March. Khrushchev accepted the mission in principle on 8 January. Iranian Foreign Ministry officials feel, however, that the USSR will continue to press for a prior agreement on some points which could be announced in Moscow on the occasion of the visit. The USSR's aim is a political accommodation which would at least begin to weaken Iran's ties with the West, but the Shah insists he will agree to nothing which would compromise Iran's obligations to the Central Treaty Organization and the United States.

25X6

25X1

21 Jan 61

DAILY BRIEF

iii

25X1

25X1

25X6

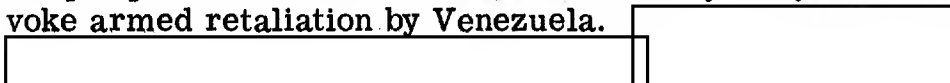


THE WEST

Dominican Republic - Venezuela: Trujillo is reported as "impatient and upset" because a plan to assassinate President Betancourt of Venezuela had not had "results" several days ago. There is other strong evidence that Trujillo's specialist in clandestine operations has been concocting another attempt against the Venezuelan Government or against Betancourt personally. The Venezuelan Government has been concerned since November over evidence of renewed plotting by Venezuelan exiles in the Dominican Republic, which supported an abortive uprising of dissident Venezuelan military officers last April and the assassination effort against Betancourt in June. Any further attempt against the Betancourt government by Trujillo could provoke armed retaliation by Venezuela.

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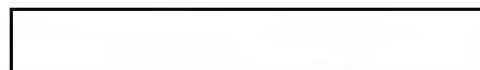
25X1

21 Jan 61

DAILY BRIEF

iv

25X1



Next 3 Page(s) In Document Exempt

USSR Central Committee Plenum on Agriculture

Proceedings of the USSR central committee plenum on agriculture which met 10-18 January in Moscow confirm that Soviet agriculture has made little progress toward achieving the 70-percent increase in output called for by the Seven-Year Plan (1959-63). Agricultural production in 1960, as in 1959, remains below that of the 1958 base year of the plan.

OK According to the resolution adopted by the plenum, investment in agriculture is to be increased to "make up for lost time." Programs were outlined for increasing the farm machinery pool, expanding irrigation, and increasing the production of mineral fertilizers--all requiring substantial amounts of additional capital. The amount of increase was not disclosed, but an earlier report suggested that it may be as much as 15-percent greater than originally scheduled under the plan, a significant increase, though small in terms of the total investment program which overwhelmingly favors heavy industrial development.

The role of the Ministry of Agriculture is to change. Until now the ministry was responsible for the entire agricultural operation--about 6,500 state farms, which are state enterprises similar in operation to industrial enterprises, and over 50,000 collective farms, which are profit-sharing enterprises operated on state lands and under state supervision. Under the new set-up the ministry was charged with improving agricultural research and its application and the training of agricultural personnel. The extent to which the ministry is to be divested of its administrative role is not yet known.

A new agency is to be created to supply farms with industrial products and to maintain farm equipment. Khrushchev described the agency as an association with a hierarchical administration composed of representatives at each level from the republics down to the farms themselves intended to give the farms a

25X6

greater say in the kind of agricultural supplies to be provided by industry.

The system through which the regime procures agricultural products for state use is to be reorganized. This is intended to give the state better control over sales at the local levels and to do away with such practices as the purchase by farms at state-sale outlets of products which were then sold back to the state as part of the farm's production quota.

The proceedings of the plenum suggest that the regime intends to increase its pressure on farmers' markets, the last principal vestiges of free enterprise in the USSR.

While the administrative measures should improve the efficiency of Soviet agriculture, the efficacy of Khrushchev's program in fostering renewed agricultural growth will depend primarily on the size of the additional resources and the speed with which they are made available.

Khrushchev repeatedly reaffirmed many of his pet agricultural measures. These included programs to increase drastically the area sown to corn, cultivation of the marginal lands of Central Asia and Western Siberia--the "new lands" program--and the emphasis on material incentives as motivation for the Soviet farmer in place of earlier emphasis on Communist enthusiasm and coercion.

25X1

25X6

Next 7 Page(s) In Document Exempt

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